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HOUSEKEEPERS' CHAT

Wednesday, September 21, 1932.

(FOR BROADCAST USE ONLY)

Subject: "How to Treat Velvet." Information approved by the Bureau of Home Economics, U. S. D. A.

More questions coming from home dressmakers these days. And the majority of them are about make-over problems.

Take the letter I have right here. It's from a lady who wants to make over a black velvet dress. The velvet isn't worn, but it has been badly crushed and flattened at the back and on the sleeves.

"Is there any way to renew old velvet?" this lady asks.

"Yes," answer the clothing specialists. "Steam is the answer."

An old velvet dress that looks almost hopeless may come out like new after a good steaming. I know because I saw my Next-Door Neighbor do a very successful job of steaming velvet only last year. What do you think she used for the steaming apparatus? Nothing but her kitchen tea kettle and a piece of rubber tubing about four feet long. The tea kettle is most convenient for this job if it has a very tightly fitting lid and a good-sized spout. The rubber tube needs to be the right size to fit on the spout.

Shall I tell you how my neighbor went at this job of steaming? She hung her velvet dress on a hanger near the stove. Then she filled her tea kettle only about half full of water, so that the steam could pass out unhindered. Then she attached the rubber tube to the spout of the kettle and when the water inside began to boil and the steam began to come out she stuck the open end of the tube up inside the dress. Because the tube soon became too hot to hold, she wrapped a small towel around it. To raise the pile of the velvet she held the steaming tube as near as she could to the back of the fabric, but, of course, she was careful not to touch the material. Beginning at the top of the dress she slowly passed the tube downward. Certain spots on the velvet didn't entirely disappear with the steaming. These she brushed up lightly with a soft brush and steamed again. When the dress was damp from top to bottom and thoroughly steamed, she hung it up in a doorway to dry.

I inquired why she chose a doorway to hang a dress in.

"Two good reasons," said she. "In the first place, a doorway has a good draft, plenty of air passing through to dry the dress. Then, damp velvet has to hang where it will have nothing brushing against it, even a wall, to make marks on it."

I asked the clothing specialists whether this method of steaming would work with rayon velvet. They suggested that it was safest to experiment on an in-

conspicuous piece of a rayon velvet dress before doing any general steaming. If a small sample of the material comes out all right after steaming, you can feel safe about treating the whole dress to a steam bath.

These specialists were good enough to give me some other information on dealing with velvet to help any of you housekeepers who are working with it. They say that velvet needs different and more delicate care than other dress materials. When you are choosing it, select a piece that looks well on the wrong side. Allow plenty of yardage, since pile fabrics are likely to require more than other materials. Velvet cut against the pile will not mark as easily.

By the way, when you are cutting a pattern out of velvet or when you are fitting it, be very careful not to mark or mar it. Even ordinary pins may make marks that will be difficult to take out. Better use very thin sharp pins known as "silk pins", or even needles will be good. And remove them immediately. Thread also may mark the velvet. So use silk thread for basting. Be sure the seams are right before stitching them, because machine stitching leaves a very definite mark on the fabric.

Velvet, you know, doesn't give as most other fabrics do. So you have to be most careful about fitting a velvet dress. Be sure you don't fit it too closely to the figure, for that may cause the seams to pull out.

Now let's see. What other suggestions did I collect for you about velvet? Oh, yes. Here's a hint about pressing the seams. Of course, you can't press velvet as you do other fabrics. That would flatten the pile hopelessly. Yet the seams need pressing to make the dress look finished. So stand your iron on end, cover it with a damp cloth, and draw the seam across the edge of the iron. That really amounts to steaming in the seams.

Suppose now that you do get some creases or mars in the material while you're making it up. In that case, just steam the velvet again.

Just one more hint. Ordinary hems are too thick on material like velvet. So picot edges are better for the bottoms of the skirt or for the edges of drapes.

How would you like a delicate fluffy cheese souffle for lunch today or tomorrow? That's what the Menu Specialist has planned. Here's her menu; Cheese souffle; Buttered green peas; Fried tomatoes; Graham muffins and fresh fruit jelly or preserves; Coffee.

I'll repeat that menu and then you shall have our very best recipe for cheese souffle.

Cheese Souffle; Buttered green peas; Fried tomatoes; Graham muffins with fresh fruit jelly or preserves; Coffee.

Now would you like to write the recipe for cheese souffle? Eight ingredients.

4 eggs
1 and 1/2 cups of milk
1 cup of fine dry bread crumbs
1 tablespoon of butter or other fat
1/2 pound of American cheese
3/4 teaspoon of salt
1/8 teaspoon of paprika, and
3 drops of tabasco sauce.

I'll repeat that list of eight. (Repeat.)

Heat the milk, the bread crumbs and the fat in the double boiler. Shave the cheese into thin slices, add it to the hot mixture and stir until the cheese has melted. Add this mixture to the well-beaten egg yolks. Season to taste with paprika and tabasco. Fold the hot mixture into the stiffly beaten egg whites containing the salt. Pour into a greased dish and bake in a very moderate oven (300 degrees F.) for one hour--or until set in the center. Serve immediately.

We've talked before about the secrets of a perfect souffle, but we may as well review a point or two since we're on the subject. Long slow cooking, say the specialists, is the big secret of making a perfect souffle. The very moderate oven heat of 300 degrees F. expands the air bubbles in the egg whites and sets the light mixture without toughening it. Housekeepers often write me that their souffles fall. If you bake them at very moderate heat for an hour or longer and if you serve the souffle immediately, you won't have this trouble. When a souffle or an omelet or a meringue collapses like a pricked balloon, it's a safe bet that the cooking was too rapid, that the outside overcooked before the center was set.

To go with an egg dish, I don't know anything better than sliced tomatoes, dipped in egg and bread crumbs and fried on both sides in hot fat. Serve them on a hot platter garnished with chopped parsley. The complete recipe is in the green cookbook.

Thursday: "Preparing Your Home for Cold Weather."

